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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF ANIMAL INDUSTRY
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BUTTERMILK AND ARTIFICIAL BUTTERMILK

One of the most economical ways of disposing of surplus milk is by the sale of buttermilk or of artificial buttermilk. Skim milk or sour milk can be utilized in this way profitably. There is already a considerable amount of buttermilk dispensed by milk dealers, but there is opportunity in many cities for much larger sales. Many physicians recommend buttermilk for dyspepsia and for other ailments of the digestive system. It is a favorite beverage with many people, and is without doubt superior to many other drinks served at soda fountains, etc. It is sold in large quantities for cooking purposes to the family trade, as well as to bakeries, restaurants, etc.

Buttermilk is the natural product from the churning of the cream or milk into butter; according to a recent ruling of the Bureau of Chemistry, the product obtained from skim milk or from whole milk not churned must be labeled to show that it is not real buttermilk. This law of course applies to interstate shipments only.

Perhaps one of the reasons that some dealers do not handle the so-called "commercial" product is that they do not know how to make it. It takes practice and experience to be able to obtain a uniformly good product, but the following may be of assistance to some not familiar with the process:

Clean, sweet skim milk or whole milk should be used, and pasteurization is preferable, as it insures a better product from both a commercial and a sanitary standpoint. Better results are obtained from skim milk if some whole milk is mixed with it, as 1 part whole milk to 3 parts skim milk. Run the milk into a water-jacketed vat, and add good, clean starter enough to ripen the milk by the time wanted for churning. Five to ten gallons of starter for each 100 gallons of milk should be sufficient. Take particular care to keep a good starter on hand, renewing it as often as necessary. Cover the vat to keep out flies and dirt, and ripen the milk at a temperature of from 60° to 70° F. The ripening temperature will depend upon the amount of starter added and the length of time which the milk has to set. Ripen the milk until it is coagulated into a rather soft curd. If the milk ripens too rapidly, run cold water around the vat to check the process. When the milk is ready, strain it into the churn, and churn for about 20 minutes, or until the butter has gathered in small granules. The milk should be churned at 55° to 65° F. When butter comes, strain the buttermilk and cool it *at once*, using a cooler if possible. If no cooler is available, put the cans immediately into a tank of ice water or a refrigerator. If possible, bottle the retail buttermilk at once. Many firms use brown bottles for buttermilk, which seems to be a good plan, as no mistakes will be made in delivery, and the bottles can be kept separate for washing. Whenever possible, use a separate bottler for buttermilk. If this is not possible, particular care should be taken in washing and sterilizing the machine after buttermilk is handled.

Further information on this subject is given in U. S. Department of Agriculture Bulletin 319, entitled "Fermented Milks," which may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., for 5 cents.



